INNOVATIONS
in AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

APPLICATION

2003

INTRODUCTION

Since its inception in 1986, Innovations in American Government has focused on innovation in state, city, town, county, tribal, and territorial governments. In 1995, Innovations was expanded to incorporate innovations in the federal government. Innovations is funded through an endowment from the Ford Foundation and is administered by the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University in partnership with the Council for Excellence in Government.

Throughout its history, Innovations in American Government has accepted applications in all policy areas. From civic engagement to juvenile justice, recycling to adult education, parks to the management of debt, public health to e-governance, Innovations applications reflect the full scope of government activity. As Innovations moves forward domestically and internationally, it becomes increasingly interested in government initiatives that strengthen and foster democracy.

ELIGIBILITY

Innovations in American Government strives to identify and celebrate outstanding examples of creative problem solving in the public sector. All units of government—federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial—within the United States of America are eligible for recognition and awards under the following guidelines:

- Programs must be administered under the authority of one or more governmental entities
- Programs must receive at least half of their funding from one or more governmental entities
- Programs must have been implemented before January 1, 2002
- Applications must be submitted by the governmental entity responsible for the innovation; nonprofit, private-sector, and union initiatives are eligible only with significant governmental involvement and oversight

While Innovations in American Government encompasses all levels of American government, it focuses on domestic programs. Innovations that arise within defense and international agencies are eligible if they have significant domestic policy content -- e.g. job training, base conversion, procurement reform, energy conservation, or environmental protection. Weapons systems will not be considered.

THE AWARDS PROCESS

The deadline for receipt of paper applications is 5:00 P.M. (EST) on Friday, May 30, 2003.

We encourage you to instead submit an on-line application, which can be found at (www.innovations.harvard.edu). The on-line application is an easy and safe way of applying for an Innovations Award. To encourage its use, the deadline for receipt of the on-line application is 8:00 P.M. (EST) on Friday, June 6, 2003. All submitted applications become the property of Innovations in American Government.

During the fall of 2003, one hundred applicants from the preliminary application pool will advance to the second round of the competition. Each of these applicants will then submit a more comprehensive application. During the winter, fifteen of the one hundred applicants will advance to the third round of the competition. Following a successful site visit, each of the fifteen will be eligible to receive a monetary grant.

In May 2004, members of the National Selection Committee will select the five award winners. Each winner is eligible to receive a $100,000 grant to be used to develop a replication plan in cooperation with Innovations staff and consistent with Innovations guidelines.

2

SELECTION CRITERIA

Each program will be evaluated according to the following four criteria:

- Its novelty, the degree to which the program demonstrates a leap of creativity
- Its effectiveness, the degree to which the program has achieved tangible results
- Its significance, the degree to which the program successfully addresses an important problem of public concern
- Its transferability, the degree to which the program, or aspects of it, shows promise of inspiring successful replication by other governmental entities

BEFORE SUBMITTING THE APPLICATION

- Make sure you have completed the data sheet
- Make sure you have responded to each of the eight essay topics
- Make sure the agency director has reviewed the completed application

SUBMITTING THE PAPER APPLICATION

Send your data sheet and essay responses to:

Innovations in American Government

John F. Kennedy School of Government

Harvard University

79 John F. Kennedy Street

Cambridge, MA 02138

The deadline for the paper application is Friday, May 30, 2003, at 5:00 P.M. (EST).

SUBMITTING THE ON-LINE APPLICATION

If you choose to take advantage of the ease of filing on-line, you may find the application and detailed instructions on the Innovations website: (www.innovations.harvard.edu). The on-line application will be available starting Monday, March 31, 2003. The deadline for the on-line application is Friday, June 6, 2003, at 8:00 P.M. (EST).

JOIN THE INNOVATIONS COMMUNITY

Whether or not you choose to apply for an Innovations Award, we invite you to join the Innovations community. Go to the Innovations website, provide your contact information, and indicate what types of information you would like to receive -- e.g. awards brochures, applications, research papers, newsletters, or case studies.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT OF APPLICATION

You will receive an e-mail from Innovations acknowledging receipt of your application within six weeks of the application deadline. Due to the volume of applications Innovations receives, members of the staff are unable to accept phone inquiries regarding the receipt of an application. If you have not received your acknowledgment e-mail by July 11, 2003, please contact Innovations.

If you have questions that are not addressed in these instructions, please contact Innovations: innovations@harvard.edu or 617.495.0557.

1. **Program Start Date:**

    Provide the date on which the innovation was launched. *To be eligible for an Innovations Award, programs must have been implemented prior to January 1, 2002.*

2. **Policy Specification Number:**

    Please visit the Innovations website to identify the number that should be placed here:(www.innovations.harvard.edu/ps2003.html). Applications received without a Policy Specification Number will not be considered. If you do not have access to the Internet, please call Innovations.

3. **Type of Jurisdiction:**

    Please refer to the eligibility requirements on page 2. Select the number that corresponds to the type of governmental authority overseeing the program:

    1. federal   2. state   3. county
    4. city/town   5. tribal   6. territorial
    7. school district
    8. special or regional authority
       (a legally created entity that does not function under the direction of any local or state jurisdiction or federal agency)
    9. government corporation
       (a legally created organization that does not function under the direction of any jurisdiction)

    Applications stemming from multi-jurisdictional partnerships must be submitted by a "lead" agency, and the type of jurisdiction should correspond to that lead agency.

4. **Name of Jurisdiction:**

    Name the governmental authority overseeing the program -- e.g. City of Topeka, KS; the State of Georgia; Chicago Public Schools, IL. Federal applicants should specify the federal department or agency -- e.g. Department of Labor; Environmental Protection Agency; General Accounting Office.

5. **Name of Sponsoring Unit:**

    Name the unit within the jurisdiction through which the program is administered -- e.g. Department of Public Works; University of Georgia; Emerson Elementary School; Occupational Safety and Health Administration; Environmental Information; Defense Capabilities and Management.

6. **Population of Jurisdiction:**

    Indicate the total number of persons residing in the specified jurisdiction. The population for all federal programs is 287,000,000.

4

Before filling out the application, please detach this sheet and
read the instructions on pages 4 and 6.

HARVARD
UNIVERSITY
JOHN F. KENNEDY
SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT

1. Program's Start Date: _____ / _____ / _____

2. Policy Specification Number: ☐☐☐   3. Jurisdiction: ☐

4. Name of Jurisdiction (selected above): _____

5. Name of Sponsoring Unit: _____

6. Population of Jurisdiction: _____

7. Program Name: _____

8. Prior Application Status: _____
   If the program has previously applied for an Innovations Award, list year(s) and to what stage it advanced.

9. Contact Information: MR. / MS. / DR. _____
                          NAME

   _____
   TITLE   DEPARTMENT/DIVISION

   _____
   SUITE/ROOM NUMBER

   _____
   ADDRESS 1

   _____
   ADDRESS 2

   _____
   CITY   STATE   ZIP CODE

   _____
   TELEPHONE   FAX

   _____
   E-MAIL   WEBSITE

10. Agency Director Information:

   _____
   NAME OF AGENCY DIRECTOR   TITLE

   _____
   AGENCY

11. Application Source: ☐ _____
                          NAME OF SOURCE

For internal use.

m1 m2 m3 m4 m5 m6 m7 m8

Page 12 of 79

7. **Program Name:**

   Please limit the name to five words or fewer; do not use an acronym; do not identify the location or agency sponsoring the program -- e.g. "Suffolk County's Labor Management Program" should be "Labor Management Program."

8. **Prior Application Status:**

   If the program has previously applied for an Innovations Award, list year(s) and to what stage it advanced (did not advance, semifinalist, or finalist).

9. **Contact Information:**

   Please provide the name and contact information of the person who will be responsible for the application. This person should be someone to whom Innovations staff can address questions and expect a prompt response.

10. **Agency Director:**

    Provide the name and title of the person responsible for the day-to-day operations of the program. *Please ensure that the agency director has approved the completed application prior to your submitting it.*

11. **Application Source:**

    Select the number that corresponds to the means by which you learned about the Innovations Program:

    1 = professional publication   2 = newspaper or magazine
    3 = colleague   4 = television
    5 = radio   6 = professional conference
    7 = e-mail or listserv   8 = departmental circulation
    9 = Internet   10 = received application in the mail

    If applicable, please provide the name of the source.

12. **Essay Guidelines:**

    Please respond to each of the eight essay topics on the following page in narrative form using the following guidelines:

    - Put the program name at the top of each page
    - Introduce each response with the topic it addresses
    - Cite verifiable evidence whenever possible
    - Make sure that responses are neatly typed and single-spaced, have one-inch margins on all sides, and are printed in a 12 point or larger font
    - Do not exceed the word limit given for each response
    - Do not include charts, graphs, or pictures within your response; they will be removed
    - Do not present supplementary materials, including letters of endorsement or press clippings; evaluators will not see them

6

An Emphasis

As the Innovations Program develops partnerships with other entities devoted to enhancing good governance and expands its dissemination efforts domestically and internationally, it becomes increasingly interested in recognizing initiatives that improve democratic governance and strengthen the relationship between citizens and their government. In their essay responses, applicants are encouraged to consider how their intiative involves citizens in decision-making, enhances the confidence of citizens in the work of government and makes that work more transparent, increases civic participation, or strengthens democratic processes. Of course, we realize some initiatives do not explicitly enhance democratic governance; such initiatives are still encouraged to apply and can present a formidable application.

Essay Topics:

1. Please provide a two-sentence summary of the program. (30 words)

2. Describe the program. Please emphasize its creative elements. What is the innovation? (400 words)

3. What problem(s) does your program address? (250 words)

4. Cite the best verifiable evidence of the most significant achievements of the program. (250 words)

5. Who are the current and potential beneficiaries of the program? What are the direct or indirect benefits to citizens? (200 words)

6. How replicable is the program or aspects thereof? What obstacles might others encounter? (250 words)

7. For the current operating budget, list all current funding **sources**, with dollar and percentage contributions for each source. *To be eligible for an Innovations Award, a program must receive at least half of its funding from one or more government institutions.* If applicable, include separate subtotals for public and private funds and sources. (200 words)

8. Please list reports, articles, and/or audits (if any) that *independently* verify claims made in your application. Please **do not** include copies of these materials with your application. Applicants who are unable to provide a means by which claims can be verified are still strongly encouraged to apply for an Innovations Award and can still present a compelling application.

Tips from Prior Innovations Winners:

- Think carefully about how to convey the essence of your innovation and its most significant benefits simply, vividly, and succinctly
- Get early and wide-ranging feedback from colleagues and coworkers to ensure that you are communicating as clearly and persuasively as possible; have persons not affiliated with the program review the essay responses as well
- Avoid jargon, acronyms, and technical terms
- Review the other tips and the sample application—real applications submitted by past Innovations winners—located on the Innovations website

7